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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/748,247	12/31/2003	Osamu Kasai	2695-061A	6994

7590 01/22/2007
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EXAMINER	
NGUYEN, BINH AN DUC	
ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
3714	

SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD OF RESPONSE	MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
3 MONTHS	01/22/2007	PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire 6 MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/748,247	KASAI ET AL.
	Examiner	Art Unit
	Binh-An D. Nguyen	3714

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 10 August 2005.
 2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.
 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11; 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 5,13,17,21,23,25 and 27 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
 6) Claim(s) 5,13,17,21,23,25 and 27 is/are rejected.
 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
 10) The drawing(s) filed on 31 January 2003 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 - Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 - Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. 09/606,202.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____

4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____

5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
 6) Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

The Amendment filed August 10, 2005 has been received. According to the Amendment, claims 5, 13, 17, 21, 23, 25, and 27 have been amended. Currently, claims 5, 13, 17, 21, 23, 25, and 27 are pending in the application. Acknowledgment has been made.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 5, 13, 17, 21, 23, 25, and 27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Takahashi Shoji (Japanese Publication No. 08-318050) in view of Jacks et al. (4,692,941).

Referring to claims 5, 13, 17, 21, 23, 25, and 27, Shoji teaches a video game method and apparatus (or computer readable medium that enables the computer to perform the method thereto) for proceeding with a game in such a way that a player character and a game character communicate in accordance with an operation of a player, in which the game character issues a voice message, comprising: inputting and setting (or means thereto) by the player a character string representing a way of calling the player character in accordance with an operation of the player (abstract; page 4, paragraphs 4 and 5; page 12, paragraphs 6-11); creating at least one voice message of the game character calling to the player character, on the basis of the set character

string representing the way of calling the player character or a preset calling word, wherein game processor is adapted to transmit a plurality of accent types of the voice message to be displayed to the player to enable the player to select at least one accent type at will (Fig. 2; page 5, paragraphs 8-10; page 13, paragraphs 11-14); a memory (RAM) connected to said processor for storing said voice message created (page 5, paragraph 11), and wherein said processor is adapted to vary at least one of the intonation, volume and total average pitch of the voice message stored in said memory in accordance with the progress of the game, when the game character calls to the player character, wherein the accent types to be displayed to the player are prepared in accordance with the number of characters of the set character string (pages 7 and 11).

Takahashi Shoji does not explicitly teach the amended limitation of voice message creating means is arranged for determining an accent based on one or more dictionaries for speech synthesis and if the accent cannot be determined based on one or more dictionaries for speed synthesis then a plurality of accent types of the voice message are displayed on a screen to enable the player to select them at will. **Jacks et al.**, however, teaches a real-time text-to-speech conversion system wherein the system first compares text words to an exception dictionary; if the word is not found therein the system applies standard pronunciation rules to the text word (see abstract; 1:12-45; 2:32-3:30; 4:48-6:68; 10:11-27). It would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to provide the real-time text-to-speech conversion system of Jacks et al. to the game machine capable of changing accent of voice output of screen-displayed sentence, as taught by Takahashi Shoji, to come up

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with a faster game system that produces a naturally rapid and continuous transitions of the input words entered by the game players, thus limit game disruptions and increase game excitements.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 5, 13, 17, 21, 23, 25, and 27 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Binh-An D. Nguyen whose telephone number is 571-272-4440. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Xuan Thai can be reached on 571-272-7147. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

BN


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